



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 155

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2009

No. 172

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Here we are again, Lord, a people in need of Your presence and power in order to meet life with courage and faith.

Today, strengthen the Members of this body with a faith that will ever choose the harder right over the easy expedient. Give them wisdom to follow Your example of sacrificial service, infusing them with the courage to do right as You give them the light to see it. Lord, lift from them the burden of loss and sorrow when forces beyond their control invade their lives and seek to rob them of Your peace. Bless them with the assurance that they are never alone, for You have promised never to forsake them. Fill their disappointments with Your strengthening presence, transforming their darkness into the glory of Your new dawn of hope and life.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK L. PRYOR led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 19, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PRYOR thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for an hour. Senators during that time will be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The majority will control the first 30 minutes and the Republicans will control the final 30 minutes.

Following morning business, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. 1963, which is the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act. Debate on the bill will be limited to 30 minutes equally divided and controlled between Senators AKAKA and BURR or their designees. The only amendment in order to the bill is the Coburn amendment relating to the funding pri-

orities in this bill. Debate on the Coburn amendment is limited to 3 hours, with Senator COBURN controlling 2 hours and Senator AKAKA controlling the final hour.

At 2 p.m., the Senate will resume debate on the nomination of David Hamilton to be U.S. circuit judge for the Seventh Circuit. Debate until 2:30 is going to be equally divided and controlled between Senators LEAHY and SESSIONS or their designees.

At 2:30 p.m., the Senate will proceed to a series of three rollcall votes. Those votes will be on confirmation of the Hamilton nomination, in relation to the Coburn amendment, and on passage of the veterans omnibus bill.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we have traveled a great distance to get where we stand today. With the bill we unveiled last night, we begin the last leg of this historic journey.

The American people and President Obama have asked us for health insurance reform. There are two things we must have above all: No. 1, make it more affordable for every American to live a healthy life, and No. 2, do so in a fiscally responsible way that helps our economy recover. Senate Democrats have listened, and we have written a bill that will save lives, save money, and save Medicare.

Since yesterday evening, the bill has been on the Internet for all to see. You will find it at democrats.senate.gov, but here is a quick summary of what is in that bill. And I say, Mr. President, this is a big bill. I was at a meeting with some other Senators this morning, and everyone acknowledged that no one can ever remember a bill that affects everybody in America as this bill does. It is a bill that has a lot of pages in it. But, as we know, it is printed the way all bills are printed. If we wanted to print it in smaller fashion—as books are written, for example—it

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S11515